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This Week in Wabash



Hello, Wabash,

Happy Monday. I hope your week is off to a great start. I'm so glad the temperatures are approaching reasonable levels again. Now I just have to remember to keep the bugs off me. Even a few minutes of sitting on the porch has me slapping at my skin as the mosquitoes land to feast. I think it's the heavy rains mixed with the higher temperatures.

This week I wanted to draw your attention to another interview I conducted with an act who performed this past weekend at the Honeywell Center. [This one was with Great White](#), the hard rock band which achieved its greatest success in the 1980s.



I wanted to highlight this story, not just because the interview with multi-instrumentalist Michael Lardie went well, but also because I had a bit of a dilemma

I spelled out in the Editor's Note which I included in the middle of the story:

On Feb. 20, 2003, the band billed as Jack Russell's Great White, was playing at a nightclub in West Warwick, Rhode Island called The Station. Great White itself had originally broken up in 2001. (The band later reformed in 2006.) Jack Russell's Great White which included original lead singer Jack Russell and lead guitarist Mark Kendall, was playing Great White songs and Russell's solo work that evening. Seconds after the show started, pyrotechnics ignited by tour manager Daniel Biechele started a fire which ended up killing 100 people and injuring another 230. Biechele later pled guilty to 100 counts of involuntary manslaughter.

The phone interview with the Plain Dealer was originally scheduled to be with Kendall.

"Mark is pleased to answer your questions. The families of the Rhode Island Station Fire have asked Great White to not publicly discuss the tragedy. I thank you for not bringing this into the conversation. I also ask that you avoid political and COVID-19 topics," stated Great White's publicist Melissa L. Kucirek.

However, before the interview was scheduled to begin, the band instead asked for the interview to be conducted with Lardie instead of Kendall. Lardie was not a part of Jack Russell's Great White that had performed at The Station. Lardie played with Night Ranger from 2003 to 2007, before returning to Great White. Also, earlier this year, Russell was replaced as the lead singer of Great White by Andrew Freeman.

So, I clearly couldn't not mention it at all. (The Station fire was the fourth-deadliest at a nightclub in U.S. history.) But, I understand and respect the families of the victims asking for silence from the band on the issue. I just wanted to be transparent to my readers about my process for working through it.

That's all I have for you today. I hope you have a great rest of your week.

Best,
Rob



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